

Remarks

The following remarks are submitted to be fully responsive to the Office Action dated April 6, 2004. It is further submitted that this response is timely filed within the three-month shortened statutory period. Reconsideration of all outstanding grounds of the rejection and allowance of the subject application are believed in order and respectfully requested.

The Examiner's allowance of claims 17-27 is noted with appreciation. Regarding the Official Action, claims 1-3, 5, 11, 13, 15, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,293,514 to Pechoux et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,163,476 to Wessman. By this amendment, claims 1-3, 5, 11, 13 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Also, claims 4, 7, 9, and 10 are canceled as the subject matter of these claims is presently recited in allowed claims 17, 21-23, respectively. Withdrawal of the rejection of these claims is believed proper and respectfully requested.

Regarding independent claims 15 and 16, these claims are presently amended to include certain features believed allowable. In particular, independent claims 15 and 16 are amended to include the subject matter of claim 4. That is, claims 15 and 16 are presently amended to recite that at least one of the channels has an open area shape at a cross-section location of the regulating portion that is substantially rectangular. Applicants accordingly believe that claims 15 and 16 are allowable as presently amended, which allowance is earnestly requested.

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Application NO. 10/054,318
Amendment dated: July 2, 2004
Reply to Office Action of April 6, 2004

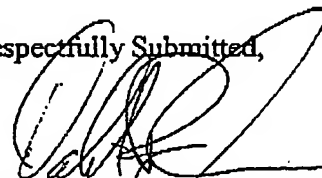
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In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims and the present application are now in condition for allowance, which allowance is earnestly solicited. In the event that a phone conference between the Examiner and the Applicant's undersigned attorney would help resolve any remaining issues in the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned as set out below.

Dated: July 2, 2004

By:

Respectfully Submitted,



Dale A. Bjorkman, Reg. No. 33,084



33072

PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Phone: 651-275-9811

Facsimile: 651-351-2954

DAB/KJH/13497